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Organizational matters

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I. Organizational matters

1. The second regular session 2016 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York in from 6 to 9 September 2016.

2. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its second regular session 2016 (DP/2016/L.3), and approved the report of the annual session 2016 (DP/2016/18). The Board approved the draft annual workplan for 2017 (DP/2016/CRP.2) and approved the tentative workplan for the first regular session 2017.

3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the second regular session 2016 appeared in document DP/2017/2, which was available on the Executive Board website.

4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2016/21 to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2017:

First regular session:	30 January to 3 February 2017
Annual session:	30 May to 9 June 2017
Second regular session:	5 to 11 September 2017

UNDP segment

II. Statement by the Administrator and UNDP funding issues

Statement by the Administrator

5. In her opening remarks to the Executive Board (available on the Executive Board website), the Administrator, UNDP, addressed a series of topics against the backdrop of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UNDP funding situation. Those topics included UNDP engagement in: major global agendas; United Nations development system reform and the quadrennial comprehensive review of operational activities for development 2016; corporate finances, in particular the status of regular (core) and other (non-core) resources; humanitarian situations across the globe; continued efforts to guarantee transparency and accountability in all areas of work; improving the quality of country programmes; and building a stronger evaluation function and culture throughout the organization.

6. On the global agendas in particular, the Administrator drew attention to UNDP work with United Nations country teams to implement the 2030 Agenda through the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support (MAPS) approach in the following areas: multi-sector planning, statistical capacity strengthening, awareness-raising and partnership-building related to the Sustainable Development Goals (heretofore, the Goals). At the national level, she highlighted UNDP collaboration with UNDG partners in inter-agency activities for country delivery of the 2030 Agenda, which included most notably the global pooled funding mechanism, standard operating procedures, and United Nations country teams' plan of action. UNDP, she noted, was also working with other United Nations organizations through UNDG to strengthen the quadrennial review 2016 in support of the 2030 Agenda, aimed at drawing on each organizations' distinct comparative advantages. UNDG made numerous proposals on how to improve the quadrennial review 2016, which included closer United Nations system operational integration, a stronger resident coordinator system, and full implementation of the mutual accountability framework, including the firewall.

7. Turning to the 2015 Paris agreement reached at the 21st United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, she stated that UNDP was focused on helping countries to prepare to implement their nationally determined contributions by strengthening institutions, designing mitigation and adaptation actions, and improving monitoring. She also highlighted other global events in 2016 in which UNDP was actively involved: the United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

8. Turning to finances, the Administrator drew attention to the following positive trends: UNDP had received an unqualified audit opinion in 2015, marking a decade of clean audit opinions; the proportion of regular resources the organization had spent on institutional costs fell while the share of regular resources for programme activities had increased; and the proportion of management costs fell significantly in the previous two biennia. Despite this, both core and non-core resources fell in 2015, an ongoing negative trend UNDP was seeking to offset by broadening its donor base, creating new thematic funding windows, launching the 100 Partners Campaign, and mobilizing programme country contributions. UNDP, she stressed, was firmly committed to transparency and accountability, proof to donors of the impact of their contributions and an incentive for increased core contributions; in 2016, she noted, UNDP was again ranked first on the Aid Transparency Index. Evaluation was, similarly, of central importance for UNDP, whose revised evaluation policy was being submitted for Board approval at the current session.

9. The Administrator also touched on UNDP continued humanitarian work in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen – working in the areas of livelihoods, employment creation, basic services, and support to refugees and the internally displaced, among others. She noted that UNDP played a key role in advancing the humanitarian-development nexus for the 2030 Agenda, in line with its commitments at the World Humanitarian Summit under the Grand Bargain work streams.

10. Across the board, delegations commended UNDP for its central role in helping countries to mainstream the Goals into their national planning processes, for promoting developing countries priorities in recent major global agendas, and for its leadership of the resident coordinator system. They also welcomed the organization's continued work in crisis settings in support of livelihoods, employment creation, basic services and internally displaced persons, and in advancing the humanitarian-development nexus for the 2030 Agenda.

11. More specifically, some Board members stressed the importance of the organization's Grand Bargain commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit 2015, and requested an update on UNDP implementation of those commitments, in particular with regard to the priority work streams. All United Nations system development organizations, they stressed, should work together with partners to address gaps in the humanitarian response, while they called on governments to incorporate measures related to refugees and internally displaced persons into their national development strategies.

12. Delegations, however, concentrated most of their comments on the outcome of the financial review, which was the main discussion topic of the session. All intervening delegations expressed acute concern over the continued decline in core resources in 2015, and the ongoing imbalance between core and non-core resources. All major groups of delegations stressed that in order for UNDP to fulfil its mandate under the strategic plan and the quadrennial review, it required stable, predictable, flexible, long-term funding. One group expressed concern that the declining core base – along with the continuing donor trend to earmark funds – would ultimately affect the ability of UNDP to allocate adequate resources to programme countries and to deliver

on the ground. Delegations across the board sought to step up dialogue with UNDP, within the context of discussions on the new strategic plan, 2018-2021, and the quadrennial review 2016, in order to address the state of declining core.

13. Delegations noted that while reduced management costs, thematic funding windows and the 100 Partners Campaign were promising initiatives, they were concerned that the funding windows remained below target. A number of delegations also emphasized the importance of full cost recovery as a means to offsetting the difficult financial situation, but they cautioned against subsidizing non-core with core resources. A group of Board members stressed that a non-core dependent UNDP would be unable to deliver on its mandate. The group noted that while mobilization of national resources for development had had a positive impact, the modality was voluntary and intended above all to boost national ownership.

14. The same group of delegations, furthermore, underscored the importance of national ownership and the need for programmes to be based on national priorities. The group also urged UNDP to ensure that poverty eradication and the reduction of inequalities (with a focus on root causes) remained the priority areas of its development work, underpinning all other activities, as per the strategic plan, 2014-2017, the quadrennial review and major global agendas, including most notably the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing or Development, the Paris climate change agreement, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015. The group also saw the need to democratize the presence of developing countries on the Board and to ensure a more equitable geographical distribution of Member States' representation among United Nations development system personnel.

15. In response, the Administrator, UNDP, addressing the major theme of funding, stressed that UNDP was actively diversifying its funding sources while ensuring the Board that non-core was not being subsidized by core. UNDP allocated the majority of its core funding to crisis or disaster-affected countries, and was good at leveraging additional resources by, for example, transferring a percentage of core funds to other areas, such as the needs of middle-income countries. She noted in that regard that there was a substantial gap in outcomes related to democratic governance, gender equality, women's empowerment, early recovery and thought-leadership. She stated that while UNDP responded to the less flexible funding environment through institutional efficiency and economy measures, core remained vulnerable to volume reductions and exchange rate fluctuations; she urged Board members in a position to do so to increase contributions. She indicated that contributors through the 100 Partners Campaign had dropped in 2015 but was expected to rise in 2016. The structured funding dialogue was the ideal space to discuss the financial situation. While the thematic funding windows were indeed a good initiative to improve the quality of non-core, flows had not been up to par; the windows, she cautioned, however, should not divert funds from core. UNDP efforts to diversify funding included domestic resource mobilization, vertical funds, loan implementation, and the private sector.

16. The Administrator assured the Board that poverty eradication remained the core focus and benchmark of UNDP work, focused on least developed countries, while UNDP fully supported the small island developing states through the Samoa Pathway. UNDP, she highlighted, played a crucial role in assisting countries to land the 2030 Agenda at country level, working in conjunction with United Nations organizations. On the Grand Bargain and the humanitarian-development nexus, UNDP was committed to meeting the agreed targets and to working through the Resident Coordinator system to design multi-year humanitarian planning against collective outcomes, to ensure an inclusive process. UNDP also remained committed to South-South cooperation, working closely with the United Office for South-South Cooperation. UNDP was likewise committed to its leadership of the United Nations development system, a role it

hoped the quadrennial review 2016 would confirm. On the quality of country programmes, she highlighted that UNDP hoped to shift some 50 new programmes up for approval in 2017 to the first regular session 2018 to ensure they were fully aligned with the new strategic plan, 2018-2021. In closing, the Administrator stressed UNDP commitment to the evaluation function and timely implementation of evaluation recommendations, as well as to applying its zero tolerance policy on fraud while continuing to revise the policy to address all Joint Inspection Unit recommendations.

UNDP funding issues

17. The Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, and the Director, Bureau for Management Services, introduced the item and provided a presentation on UNDP funding issues, including the following documents: the annual review of the financial situation, 2015 (DP/2016/20), and detailed information relating to the annual review of the financial situation, 2015 (DP/2016/20/Add.1) and the status of regular funding commitments to UNDP and its funds and programmes for 2016 and onwards (DP/2016/21).

18. Board members welcomed the presentations and updates, but reiterated their concern over the ongoing difficult financial situation. They noted in particular that some 32 per cent of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, remained unfunded. Delegations stated that UNDP was uniquely positioned to lead the United Nations development system, but the organization had to be prepared to take on increasingly complex challenges and adapt to the new funding reality. A stable, predictable funding base was therefore needed to drive the change required. They appreciated the organization's efforts to mobilize resources through the variety of modalities mentioned in the presentations. They encouraged UNDP to actively pursue pooled funding and, in this context, stressed the importance of strengthening partnerships, outreach and collaboration with other United Nations development system organizations as part of efforts to broaden the donor base, and the need for full cost recovery. The continued drop in core resources was a principal concern, and delegations urged UNDP to continue to engage in the structured dialogue on funding issues with the Board. They cautioned against cross-subsidizing core and non-core resources, and requested more detailed information in future reports on the status of cost recovery, financial volumes, and a set of mutually agreed definitions on direct and indirect costs before discussions began on the new strategic plan, 2018-2021.

19. In response, the Chief Financial Officer, UNDP, addressed the issue of cost recovery. He noted that the terms of reference of the Board-ordered independent review focused on compliance with the Board-approved policy, which, while progressive in nature, might need revision under the new strategic plan, 2018-2021, to reflect the future funding situation. As such, some of the Board's questions might be better answered at the first regular session 2017 when discussions on the new strategic plan would begin. The financing model that would underpin the new strategic plan would incorporate a revised cost recovery policy developed specifically for that plan, reflecting lessons learned from the previous strategic plan, 2014-2017.

20. The Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, expressed appreciation for the positive comments on UNDP collaboration at country level, and welcomed announcements of new or renewed financial support, especially to core funding. UNDP, he assured the Board, did not foresee an ineluctable continued drop in core funding and explained that UNDP has faced similar downward trends in the past, which were reversed. UNDP would continue to focus on results and actively seek to adapt its business model to the evolving financial environment.

21. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/16 on UNDP funding issues.

III. Country programmes and related matters

22. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced the item and provided an overview of the 27 country programmes up for Board approval as well as the extensions of four country programmes. The regional directors for Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Latin America and the Caribbean and the deputy regional directors for Africa, and the Arab States, presented and elaborated on the country programmes for: Albania, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, the Gambia, Guyana, Honduras, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Peru, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Suriname, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Viet Nam, the sub-regional programme document for Barbados and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), as well as the two-year extension of the country programme for Malawi from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018, the first one- year extension of the country programme for Sudan from 1 January to 31 December 2017, the second one-year extension of the country programme for Somalia from 1 January to 31 December 2017, and the exceptional third-year extension of the country programme for Libya from 1 January to 31 December 2017.

23. Board members whose country programmes were up for Board review and approval commented on the programmes from the national perspective. They highlighted the participatory process followed in designing the country programmes while stressing the importance of national ownership and needs, and the achievements of their partnerships with UNDP at country level. A group of delegations expressed reservations about the country programme preparation and approval process, emphasizing that it could be improved. The same group stated that Board members should be informed at the beginning of country programme document preparations so that they could participate accordingly, a move they said which would make the country programme process more comprehensive and transparent.

24. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for: Albania (DP/DCP/ALB/2), Bahrain (DP/DCP/BHR/3), Bangladesh (DP/DCP/BGD/3), Belize (DP/DCP/BLZ/3), Brazil (DP/DCP/BRA/3 and Corr.1), Côte d'Ivoire (DP/DCP/CIV/2), Eritrea (DP/DCP/ERI/3), the Gambia (DP/DCP/GMB/3), Guyana (DP/DCP/GUY/3), Honduras (DP/DCP/HND/3), the Islamic Republic of Iran (DP/DCP/IRN/3), Jamaica (DP/DCP/JAM/3), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (DP/DCP/LAO/3/Rev.1), Lebanon (DP/DCP/LBN/2), Mongolia (DP/DCP/MNG/3), Montenegro (DP/DCP/MNE/2), Morocco (DP/DCP/MAR/3), Mozambique (DP/DCP/MOZ/3), Peru (DP/DCP/PER/3/Rev.1), Sao Tome and Principe (DP/DCP/STP/3), Saudi Arabia (DP/DCP/SAU/3 and Corr.1), Seychelles (DP/DCP/SYC/3), Suriname (DP/DCP/SUR/3), Thailand (DP/DCP/THA/3), Trinidad and Tobago (DP/DCP/TTO/3), Viet Nam (DP/DCP/VNM/2), and the sub-regional programme document for Barbados and the OECS (DP/DSP/CAR/3)

25. The Board approved the second one-year extension of the country programme for Somalia from 1 January to 31 December 2017, the two-year extension of the country programme for Malawi from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018, and the exceptional third-year extension of the country programme for Libya from 1 January to 31 December 2017, as contained in document DP/2016/22.

26. The Board took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Sudan from 1 January to 31 December 2017, as contained in document DP/2016/22.

IV. Evaluation

UNDP evaluation policy

27. The President of the Executive Board introduced the item, noting the importance of the evaluation policy and thanking Board members for their active engagement on the topic during the previous year. The President recognized the Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, as the drafter of the revised policy, and expressed his appreciation to UNDP and the Independent Evaluation Office for bringing to the Board a well-conceived new policy that reflected the views expressed by Board members during its development.

28. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, introduced the UNDP evaluation policy (DP/2016/23) and updated the Board on ongoing reforms to strengthen the decentralized evaluation function. In turn, the Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, thanked the President for his leadership in forging consensus on the issue, and presented key aspects of the new policy, including evaluation principles, operational and reporting expectations, and new funding thresholds.

29. Board members wholly welcomed the new evaluation policy, which they noted was clear and comprehensive and rooted solidly in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards. They noted that UNDP had in fact a strong evaluation base on which to build on further and create a solid corporate evaluation and learning culture. A group of delegations expressed appreciation that Board members' recommendations were reflected in the new policy, including inter alia: (a) resource allocation targets for the evaluation function; (b) management responses that integrated lessons learned and steps to address evaluation recommendations; and (c) the engagement in independent system-wide evaluations, key for measuring performance across United Nations organizations, especially important for tracking progress on the 2030 Agenda. For this, they called for enhanced coordination, exploration of new resource mobilization modalities, clear institutional roles and responsibilities relating to the evaluation function, and continued Board-UNDP dialogue on evaluation. They stressed that the management response to evaluation findings was key to better learning, a higher quality evaluation culture, and better results on the ground. They looked forward to engaging with the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee, which played a central role in advising UNDP management and the Board, at future Board sessions.

30. Delegations focused on the need for adequate resources and staff capacity for the success of the evaluation function, and urged UNDP to prioritize funding allocations to evaluation. They were pleased to note that the new policy defined funding thresholds needed to ensure success of the evaluation function and the Independent Evaluation Office. They encouraged UNDP to build on its proven strong evaluation culture when developing its new strategic plan, 2018-2021, and to give highest priority to mobilizing additional resources. They noted that the evaluation function was essential for donor confidence and an incentive for increased contributions.

31. Delegations also welcomed the steps undertaken by UNDP to improve the quality of decentralized evaluations, which had been assessed weak by the 2014 Evaluation Policy Review. They expected the new evaluation policy to provide further incentives to strengthen the quality and utility of decentralized evaluations, and looked forward to further update on UNDP efforts undertaken in that regard at the first regular session 2017.

32. On the importance of independent system-wide evaluations, delegations stressed the need to devise a common evaluation approach throughout the United Nations development system, as per the 2030 Agenda. Doing so would require better coordination and cooperation among United Nations system organizations' evaluation offices, and exploring new funding

opportunities specifically for independent system-wide evaluations. The 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review process offered a prime locus for furthering those efforts. Delegations underlined the importance of addressing evaluation recommendations in a timely manner to improve decision-making and reporting. One delegation welcomed the use of SMART indicators while stressing more was needed to improve data gathering. Another delegation stated that future revisions should be shared with the Board in advance.

33. In response, the Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, reiterated that delegations' comments fully reflected the spirit in which the new evaluation policy had been drafted. UNDP, he underscored, was committed to effective results-based management to ensure maximum impact against the resources entrusted to UNDP. UNDP was also keen to continuously build its corporate evaluation culture, through, among other measures, strengthening evaluation quality and allocating further funding to the evaluation function. He stressed that financial autonomy went hand in hand with functional independence, for which funding benchmarks and guarantees were crucial. UNDP, he assured, was committed to full implementation of the new evaluation policy once approved by the Board.

34. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, reasserted that Board comments aligned fully with what UNDP aimed to achieve in the new evaluation policy. He noted that the new policy was a model both for the United Nations system and at the international level.

Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction

35. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, presented the report on the implementation of recommendations of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction (DP/2016/26).

36. No delegations had interventions under this item, but as part of the interventions during the item on the UNDP evaluation policy, two delegations included suggestions stating that rather than narrowly focusing on 'evaluation culture' it would be better for UNDP to aspire to a robust 'learning culture' – one of the main recommendations of the 2013 evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction. They appreciated how UNDP had responded to the Board request for an update on how the organization had followed up on those recommendations. The Board-UNDP dialogue on evaluation findings, they noted, constituted a best practice. The current report helped the Board to understand how UNDP was working to alleviate poverty and 'leave no one behind', as per the Sustainable Development Goals. They were pleased to note that the strategic plan, 2014-2017, had responded to the 2013 evaluation's recommendations, and they encouraged UNDP to use the 2013 recommendations as a reference when preparing the new strategic plan, 2018-2021.

37. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, had no further comments on the item in response to the delegations' intervention.

38. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/17 on the UNDP evaluation policy and the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction.

39. The Executive Board deferred discussion of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to anti-corruption and governance integrity in a development context (DP/2016/24) as well as the management response to the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to anti-corruption and governance integrity in a development context (DP/2016/26) to the first regular session 2017.

UNFPA segment

V. Country programmes and related matters

40. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) provided an overview of the 21 country programmes presented for Board approval, as well as the extensions of nine country programmes.

41. The UNFPA regional directors for the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, East and Southern Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West and Central Africa presented the country programmes for Albania, Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, the Islamic Republic of the Gambia, Honduras, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Peru, Sao Tome and Principe, Thailand, Viet Nam, and the English-speaking and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, as well as the extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Gabon, Malawi, Mauritania, Senegal and Sudan.

42. Under the new format for consideration of CPDs, the in-depth presentation on individual country programmes, including explanations on specific issues of interest to Member States, was done at the informal session that preceded the second regular session.[1] Member States delegations whose country programmes were presented for Board discussion and approval commented on the programmes from their respective national perspectives. They highlighted the participatory processes followed in designing the country programmes while stressing the importance of national ownership and the achievements of their partnerships with UNFPA at country level. The delegate of the Kingdom of Morocco noted that his Government had requested the re-establishment of the UNFPA representative post in the country to strengthen the country office and implementation of the new country programme. A number of delegations made comments, which they requested be taken into account in the implementation of the CPDs.

43. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programmes documents for Albania (DP/FPA/CPD/ALB/4), Algeria (DP/FPA/CPD/DZA/6), Bangladesh (DP/FPA/CPD/BGD/9), Brazil (DP/FPA/CPD/BRA/6), Chad (DP/FPA/CPD/TCD/7), Côte d'Ivoire (DP/FPA/CPD/CIV/7), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DP/FPA/CPD/PRK/6), Eritrea (DP/FPA/CPD/ERI/5), the Islamic Republic of the Gambia (DP/FPA/CPD/GMB/8), Honduras (DP/FPA/CPD/HND/8), the Islamic Republic of Iran (DP/FPA/CPD/IRN/6), Lao People's Democratic Republic (DP/FPA/CPD/LAO/6), Lebanon (DP/FPA/CPD/LBN/4), Mongolia (DP/FPA/CPD/MNG/6), Morocco (DP/FPA/CPD/MAR/9), Mozambique (DP/FPA/CPD/MOZ/9), Peru (DP/FPA/CPD/PER/9), Sao Tome and Principe (DP/FPA/CPD/STP/7), Thailand (DP/FPA/CPD/THA/11), Viet Nam (DP/FPA/CPD/VNM/9), and the subregional programme document for the English-speaking and Dutch-speaking Caribbean (DP/FPA/CPD/CAR/6).

44. The Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Gabon, Mauritania and Sudan, and approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso and Burundi, and the two-year extensions for Malawi and Senegal, as contained in document (DP/FPA/2016/11).

[1] The full statement of the UNFPA Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific is annexed to this report.

VI. Statement by the Executive Director and UNFPA funding issues

45. The statement of the UNFPA Executive Director – delivered on his behalf by the Deputy Executive Director (Management), as he was unable to attend the session – highlighted the Fund's ongoing work to support countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in transitioning to the Sustainable Development Goals (heretofore, the Goals). UNFPA was in the process of developing its new strategic plan, 2018-2021, which would be fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) beyond 2014 agenda, and built on lessons learned and best practices from the previous plan while remaining focused on the plan's vision and strategic direction, known as the 'bull's eye'. She also reaffirmed the Fund's commitment to coherent implementation, monitoring and reporting with other United Nations development system organizations.

46. However, the funding situation – presented in the report on contributions by Member States and others to UNFPA and revenue projections for 2016 and future years (DP/FPA/2016/10) – continued to be critical, with a continued fall in regular resources and ongoing application of austerity measures. Revenue projections for 2016 and 2017 were, in fact, significantly below the resources needed to implement the strategic plan – owing also to unfavourable exchange rate fluctuations. As a result, UNFPA would have to make difficult choices that would affect its delivery and its beneficiaries. The resources decline had already affected its capacity to deliver on certain results, and forced the Fund to lower its budgetary ceilings in all categories of country offices, affecting both development and normative operations.

47. The Fund was actively exploring new financing modalities and opportunities (through the private sector, thematic funds and joint programmes with other United Nations organizations), in particular to ensure the financial health of the UNFPA supplies programme, and remained committed to ensuring maximum resource accountability, efficiency and effectiveness. However, while the 2015 resource mobilization strategy was bearing fruit, staff resource mobilization capacity was limited; predictable long-term core resources remained the best guarantee that the Fund would be able to carry out its mandate. She called on Member States in a position to do so to step up their contributions to regular resources. UNFPA looked forward to engaging with the Board to improve the financial situation.

48. On the humanitarian front, she highlighted that the Fund was responding to humanitarian crises in more than 56 countries, providing women and girls with sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights services, and addressing gender-based violence, building on its commitments at the World Humanitarian Summit and the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action. The Fund was active notably in Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Yemen, and in response to the Zika virus in Latin America and the Caribbean. UNFPA was also active in building local capacity and training health and protection workers, while strengthening its own crisis surge capacity, having deployed over 100 responders in nearly 20 countries to date in 2016.

49. On family planning, she stated that the Fund was revising its supplies strategy through a new governance model to boost efforts to achieve the Goals and Family Planning 2020, which now included commitments from 39 countries. Family planning activities were also critical for achieving the 2030 Agenda, especially in light of the demographic dividend in many countries and regions. She noted that the Fund would host a side event on the margins of the General Assembly (on 19 September 2016) to offer African leaders a platform to build partnerships for the demographic dividend on the continent. Similarly, the *State of the World Population 2015* report, to appear in October 2016, examined how the future depended on girls at the pivotal age of 10 years.

50. Delegations continued to show strong support for the Fund's mandate, and were encouraged by its achievements in driving the ICPD agenda forward. They welcomed the strides made in implementing the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017, in building the capacity and systems of Governments to include sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights policies and programmes in national budgets and planning, in advocating for adolescents and youth, and in strengthening intergovernmental dialogue on the demographic dividend. Board members reiterated the Fund's critical and unique role in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda, leading the way in ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health care and reproductive rights services.

51. Delegations continued, however, to express concern over the ongoing decrease in regular resource funding, which, they noted, was now negatively impacting delivery and UNFPA presence at country and regional levels. They encouraged UNFPA to continue its efforts to diversify its funding base, including through the private sector, and to mitigate the impact of exchange rate fluctuations. Some delegations underlined the importance of the annual structured dialogue on funding, which they stressed should be strengthened and institutionalized. Delegations welcomed the online portal with funding-related data, but sought more thorough analysis of the funding gaps and challenges and how they affected implementation of the strategic plan. They also called for more elaborate risk analysis of unmet financial needs, and suggested that the portal could be developed further in cooperation with other United Nations development system organizations.

52. A number of delegations underscored it was the collective responsibility of the Board to ensure UNFPA reached its full potential in providing countries with the necessary assistance to achieve Board-set priorities. This included: (a) UNFPA leading the way on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, assisting countries in tackling unsafe abortion and meeting family planning needs, including in emergencies and protracted crises; and (b) pressing ahead with reform of the UNFPA supplies programme to improve financial sustainability, supply chain management and in-country last-mile delivery. They also supported the recommendations of the thematic evaluation on UNFPA support to family planning, including implementation through a human-rights based approach.

53. Delegations stressed that the Fund, as well as the United Nations development system overall, had to demonstrate that it was making the best use of funds spent. Transparency and accountability were therefore vital for donor confidence, along with reassurance and proof that misconduct and fraud were being dealt with swiftly and robustly. They sought a clear, action-oriented response to the Joint Inspection Unit report on fraud prevention. Some delegations indicated that UNFPA should combine capacities for greater impact and mobilize resources together with other United Nations development system organizations through global thematic funds, pooled funds and joint programmes. Such efforts should also benefit from a cost-benefit analysis and be assessed from an aid effectiveness perspective. They requested details on cost recovery in future reports, guided by the quadrennial review recommendation for a harmonized methodology, in order to ensure transparency in core resource allocations. Delegations also drew attention to the key role UNFPA played in the upcoming quadrennial review 2016 discussions.

54. Board members expressed strong support for the Fund's work in humanitarian settings to provide sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights services that also addressed gender-based violence. They applauded the Fund's commitment to the 'Grand Bargain' at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2015, and looked forward to learning how the Fund would implement, prioritize and address challenges related to its commitments. One delegation reiterated its concern about the Fund's decision not to fully fund or replenish the emergency response fund and the humanitarian response reserve, and urged management to devote

adequate resources to the two funds. A number of countries stressed the fragility of their populations and development gains in the face of demographic changes, disease and climate change, and urged UNFPA to step up its regional support, buttressed by a more equitable enabling international environment.

55. In response, UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management), welcomed delegations' comments on the centrality of the Fund's mandate in achieving the Goals, and reaffirmed that the 'bull's eye' remained the focus on the Fund's work, as per its strategic plan, 2014-2017. The funding situation, however, jeopardized the solid gains made at country level over the years; for its part, UNFPA was focused on ensuring the effective use of its available resources both for programme and operational activities, through austerity measures and by closely reviewing the Fund's priorities against the bull's eye. She noted, in response to the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report, UNFPA efforts to address the issue of fraud, the response for which was available on the JIU website. UNFPA welcomed the suggestions for the web portal, transparency, the structured dialogue, cost recovery and resource mobilization gaps, as well as on making improvements to the supplies programme both internally and externally, to which UNFPA was committed. She stated that the Fund shared the concerns of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) regarding its regional issues, adding that the new subregional programme, presented for Board approval, sought to mobilize additional resources. The Fund's difficult financial situation and the related austerity measures, she acknowledged, were having a negative effect on the region, but UNFPA was committed to maintaining its presence there.

56. On the humanitarian front, she thanked Member States for their continued support for the overall UNFPA role in humanitarian situations, particularly in preventing sexual and gender-based violence. She noted that UNFPA had allocated $4 million in the emergency fund and retained $1 million in the humanitarian response reserve. The implementation rate of the emergency fund currently stood at around 50 per cent. UNFPA still has to collect about 35 per cent of the pledges to regular resources made to UNFPA for 2016. She stressed that in view of the funding situation, the organization would make full use of existing allocations in the emergency fund and use $1 million in addition (from the humanitarian response reserve) to meet immediate needs of countries, and aimed to replenish the humanitarian response reserve once the pending funds pledged had been received.

57. The Director, Division of Communications and Strategic Partnerships, UNFPA, stressed that the Fund was making every effort to mitigate the continued drop in regular resources through the UNFPA resource mobilization strategy, which was already bearing fruit. UNFPA, he noted, welcomed the proposed three types of funding analysis for future reports, focused on funding gaps, risk analysis and benefit analysis. Since instituting country-specific targets in 2015, 68 per cent of non-core resources were coming from national-level fundraising. He highlighted that while UNFPA resource mobilization capacity remained limited, the Fund had made good progress. In 2015, UNFPA funds were hit hard by exchange rate fluctuations while 2016 figures were projected to be much lower, although affected more by declining donor contributions. He noted that a quarter of the Fund's income came from its participation in joint programmes with other United Nations organizations. On the website, UNFPA would soon have online a donor-specific web portal providing details of donor contributions against results. The Fund, he stressed, keenly welcomed continued structured dialogues on funding.

58. The Director, Division of Management Services, UNFPA, noting the Fund's measures to mitigate foreign exchange losses, highlighted that UNFPA outsourced its treasury activities to UNDP and used the same instruments as UNDP to protect its buying power at the beginning of the fiscal year. Those instruments focused essentially on regular resources, and UNFPA continually monitored the situation together with UNDP. He highlighted that the Fund's actions to immediately transfer funds to United States dollars upon reception reduced the level of risk

and that early payment of contributions would always mitigate the risk of currency fluctuation. On cost recovery, the effective rate for UNFPA was 7 per cent, taking into account thematic trust funds and government cost-sharing, in accordance with the approved harmonized methodology in decision 2013/9. The financial impact of indirect recovery waivers for 2014-2015 was minimal, below $200,000. Similarly, the number of legacy agreements was declining over time, whose effect against the original 8 per cent benchmark (in decision 2013/9) was minimal, some $1.2 million for the two-year period. UNFPA, he noted, had adopted a number of measures to implement the Board-approved cost recovery methodology, although direct cost recovery remained a challenge. He assured the Board that the Fund was ready to work with other United Nations organizations to address the recommendations of the JIU report.

59. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) reiterated that the rights-based approach was one of the cornerstones of the UNFPA bull's eye. In line with the 2030 Agenda, UNFPA was targeting the most vulnerable. She highlighted examples of UNFPA work at country level to reach the most vulnerable, including through family planning and a new set of guidelines for their implementation that promote the use of the rights-based approach. The country programmes newly included a compact of commitment that aligned the outcome results to the 2030 Agenda. The UNFPA communications strategy as well articulated the rights-based approach for inclusion in all areas of the Fund's work. She stressed that UNFPA had a 'choice not chance' policy that emphasized a non-coercive approach to family planning that included a gamut of options for couples.

60. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/18 on UNFPA funding issues.

VII. Evaluation

61. The Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA, presented the thematic evaluation of UNFPA support to family planning, 2008-2013 (DP/FPA/2016/CRP.5) and annexes, which was followed by the management response to the thematic evaluation (DP/FPA/2016/CRP.6) from the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme).

62. Board members welcomed the findings of the comprehensive thematic evaluation, whose timing they noted was key in developing the new strategic plan, 2018-2021, and in operationalizing the 2030 Agenda. Delegations recognized UNFPA as the global leader in family planning during the evaluation period 2008-2014, during which it had ensured effective delivery of supplies and universal access to contraceptives and family planning within a sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights context, including in crisis and conflict situations. They also recognized the fundamental role of the UNFPA supplies programme in achieving 2030 Agenda goals related to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. They highlighted, however, that UNFPA would have to make important strategic decisions that prioritized and enhanced national ownership and sustainability. They welcomed the reforms the Fund had begun to implement and looked forward to their full implementation to ensure commodities were reaching end-users in the most effective and efficient ways, building on lessons learned and evidence-based programming. The same group of delegations also recognized UNFPA for its work in supporting the Global Finance Facility's 'Every Woman, Every Child' initiative, for which they looked forward to the Fund's engagement at country level.

63. Another group of delegations expressed satisfaction with the thematic evaluation's generally positive outcomes, but would have preferred a more concise, focused report; they requested updates to be in a shorter form. They recognized the Fund's significant contributions to strengthening reproductive health commodity security and contraceptive supply chains. Those UNFPA activities, they stressed, played a central role in achieving the 2030 Agenda and the

Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health. They commended the Fund's leadership and commitment on family planning grounded in a human-rights based approach and the achievement of Family Planning 2020, but stressed the importance of gender equality, with a focus on the most marginalized, youth, adolescents and women, and particularly adolescent girls. They expressed strong support for the UNFPA supplies trust fund, key for furthering support for family planning. They supported integration approaches to the supplies programme, including through a robust country-support model, and encouraged the Fund to continue to support the strengthening of family planning in national health systems and to promote effectiveness and efficiency. They suggested that the Fund further scale up its engagement with the country-led Global Finance Facility and country investment cases in order to address gaps in family planning. They also encouraged UNFPA to continue working closely with local governments and partners to mainstream family planning in projects and programmes and to broker partnerships, as part of efforts to address culturally sensitive family planning issues.

64. One delegation would have preferred a broader family planning methodology that also addressed the contributions of family planning to socioeconomic development, while cautioning against using language in reports that implied Governments were 'accountable' to UNFPA.

65. In response, the Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA, welcomed delegations' assertion that the high quality of the evaluation report was useful for Board proceedings and for policy and programme planning. She noted that the Evaluation Office shared the outcomes of evaluations broadly, taking into account Board comments and decisions. On questions related to rights-based approaches and the needs of vulnerable groups, she highlighted that the report had addressed those issues, and added that UNFPA would submit to the Board in 2018 the results of a meta-evaluation of the Fund's contribution to meeting the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups. On report lengths, she noted that the Evaluation Office had begun in 2015 to produce 5,000 word briefs to address that issue, adding that evaluation reports were nevertheless technical in character and details were often required to convey the full picture. That said, the Evaluation Office actively worked to reduce the size of its reports. In response to the call for a broader methodological scope in the report, she highlighted that because the Evaluation Office had confined itself to addressing the period 2008-2013, it was unable to take into account the broader socioeconomic issues, which were only coming to the fore in 2016. On accountability, she stressed that the evaluations in general focused on the role of UNFPA, and did not in any circumstance suggest that Member States were being held to account.

66. UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) welcomed the comments on the UNFPA supplies programme, and assured delegations that the Fund always prioritized national ownership and transparent evidence-based planning and programming, principles that UNFPA would strengthen in the new strategic plan, 2018-2021. She reiterated the Fund's commitment to partnerships and to mainstreaming the gender component in all areas of its work.

67. The Director, Division for Communication and Strategic Partnerships, UNFPA, highlighted the importance of continued, strengthened partnerships to ensure ownership of initiatives with all stakeholders. On the contribution to socioeconomic development, he suggested that the focus should be on how the Fund's assistance in its areas of comparative advantage would lead to socioeconomic improvements.

68. The Director, Programme Division, UNFPA, assured delegations that the bull's eye guided the Fund's strategic focus on youth, adolescents, and especially adolescent girls, as the central element of family planning and reproductive health, and particularly in countries most in need.

69. The Executive Board was unable to reach consensus on the draft decision on the thematic evaluation of UNFPA support to family planning, 2008-2013 ((DP/FPA/2016/CRP.5) and annexes, and decided to defer further discussion and decision to the first regular session 2017.

70. In the subsequent discussion, one delegation expressed a difference with the course of action proposed by the President of the Board on the procedural aspect of the deferral of the decision, on the grounds that the existing text could not form the basis for any new negotiation. Several delegations raised concerns that the inability of the Board to reach consensus on decisions would jeopardize the effectiveness of the Board. The President of the Board reminded delegations that it was their responsibility as Board members to work together to resolve differences and reach consensus.

UNOPS segment

VIII. Statement by the Executive Director and midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017

71. In her statement to the Board, the Executive Director, UNOPS, presented the results of the midterm review of the UNOPS strategic plan, 2014-2017 (DP/OPS/2016/5), as well as the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations (DP/OPS/2016/6). The review showed how UNOPS was contributing to each of the Sustainable Development Goals in its assistance to partners, and pointed to the organization's strong management results and solid financial performance. UNOPS delivery in fact rose on average 13 per cent a year, while management expenses remained stable or declined. The review indicated that partner satisfaction was higher than ever, at 82 per cent, and UNOPS staff engagement was well above external benchmarks for high-performing international organizations. UNOPS, she stressed, continued to invest in new technology to innovate and streamline its business processes, and was driven to deliver the highest quality services to its partners.

72. Turning to the 2030 Agenda, she noted that UNOPS priority areas, currently and in the future, focused on *building new infrastructure* (through infrastructure investments and resilience planning) – one of the most important prerequisites for achieving the Goals, addressing humanitarian crises, and building resilience – and *excelling in solid and transparent procurement services*, which could yield enormous returns on a global scale and help to fight corruption. In the future, she highlighted, domestic resources would outweigh official development assistance in driving achievement of the Goals, and the United Nations would co-finance development with the private sector. UNOPS, for its part, was stepping up promotion of public-private partnerships while engaging catalytically with financial institutions in 'de-risking' projects for private investment. In all those efforts, she stated, UNOPS remained focused on procurement, project management, human resources and financial management, and infrastructure.

73. Board members commended UNOPS for its continued strong performance and achievements against its strategic plan, 2014-2017, as demonstrated in the midterm review. They welcomed the record amount of aid, greater effectiveness and high partner satisfaction, while commending the organization for working in some of the most difficult settings where most organizations did not have a presence. Delegations expressed appreciation for UNOPS engagement in fragile states and in least developed countries, focused on social and environmental impacts, and especially on the most vulnerable populations, including through public-private partnerships. Delegations, furthermore, commended UNOPS for seeking innovative ways to engage and mobilize the private sector and financial institutions, and

promote public-private partnerships. Furthermore, delegations not only expressed support for UNOPS involvement in public-private partnerships, but also strongly supported its deeper engagement with investors through its social impact investing initiative.

74. Delegations encouraged UNOPS to continue to strengthen and target its operational priorities, focusing on its three pillars – sustainable project management, sustainable infrastructure construction and sustainable procurement – while maintaining a strong capacity building component. One delegation requested a briefing on evidence-based infrastructure planning. Delegations welcomed UNOPS procurement activities but, given its associated risks, requested that the organization ensure well-defined delegations of authority and oversight mechanisms, especially for procurement of services of implementing partners. Overall, they expressed appreciation for the United Nations development system's increased procurement of services from developing country suppliers, especially those in transition and least developed countries. The UNOPS procurement approach, it was noted, had helped to boost transparency and efficiency while lowering costs, and delegations looked forward to continuing progress. The forthcoming management plan, it was requested, should clearly define the UNOPS mandate, taking into account actual capacity to provide services. Delegations urged UNOPS to continue to collaborate with and improve services to the United Nations development system at all levels, in line with the quadrennial review.

75. Board members looked forward to in-depth dialogue with UNOPS on strategies moving forward, while one delegation anticipated further discussions on the UN-Standby Team of Mediation, a group of rapidly deployable full-time mediation experts. It encouraged UNOPS to provide information on how it would follow up on common programming principles (such as human rights-based approaches and gender equality). Delegations recommended that future dialogue with the Board include discussion on how UNOPS (a project-based organization) could deliver in accordance with the United Nations system-wide 'integrated' 2030 Agenda approach, and how it viewed its role in the United Nations reform agenda and division of labour. They encouraged UNOPS to further develop its scorecard in devising its new strategic plan, 2018-2021. There was a request for UNOPS to provide Board members with a road map of the new strategic plan, 2018-2021, and to include partners in its development.

76. In response, the Executive Director, UNOPS, thanking delegations for their continued strong support, reiterated that UNOPS had developed a series of support functions that benefited partners so that they could concentrate on their core mandates. UNOPS would continue to develop its specialized services in response to ongoing demand because they not only helped partners to deliver more and better but also helped the United Nations development system to deliver as one. UNOPS, she underscored, in its pursuit to drive excellence, focused on devising services that enhanced the quality, speed and cost efficiency of development programmes. Because the UNOPS mandate focused on infrastructure and procurement, Board support to its work in those areas was crucial. The integrated plan and design of infrastructure, she noted, was key to driving the 2030 Agenda, which had to be approached and delivered in the best possible manner. Infrastructure in particular pointed to the importance of partnering with the private sector, without whom it would be impossible to achieve the 2030 Agenda, with the United Nations system driving the principles of sustainable development and remaining commitment to United Nations values. Stating that UNOPS was committed to transparency in all areas, especially procurement, she noted her readiness to expound on the results of the statistical review covering the entire United Nations development system. UNOPS, she stressed, worked at its best in fragile settings and least developed countries, providing specialized services under difficult circumstances. But it was also active in middle-income countries, an area it wished to explore further. UNOPS, she assured, would work closely with the Board and reflect its demands in designing the new strategic plan, 2018-2021.

77. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/19 on the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017.

78. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/20 on the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system, 2015.

Joint segment

IX. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

79. The Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, introduced the report of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on joint procurement activities (DP-FPA-OPS/2016/1). The Director, Office of Sourcing and Operations, UNDP, the General Counsel and Officer-in-Charge of the New York office, UNOPS, and the Chief, Procurement Services Branch, UNFPA, presented the report's focus areas and main conclusions from their organizational perspectives.

80. A group of delegations commended UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS for their increased efforts to establish innovative joint procurement activities, which had led to significant cost savings, more efficient procurement processes, and the provision of high quality goods and services. They recognized the key role of the procurement network of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) High-level Committee on Management in that area, and encouraged the Copenhagen-based United Nations offices to take a lead on procurement reform and best practices and to disseminate them throughout the United Nations system. They looked forward to the upcoming system-wide commodity study, and encouraged the three organizations to use the study's findings in their procurement work. They commended the organizations for leveraging the procurement services of other United Nations organizations, but noted that the volume (at $92 million) remained modest. Delegations encouraged the three organizations to explore opportunities for collaboration at country, regional and global levels, and to provide greater detail on the values of efficiency savings achieved across sectors and commodity categories and on how they were being reinvested in poverty reduction measures.

81. Noting procurement's high-risk nature, the delegations urged UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to ensure solid controls and oversight mechanisms while welcoming recent reforms to the United Nations Global Marketplace, which automatically screened vendors against an established sanctions list. They also welcomed the increased use of long-term agreements, encouraged the three organizations to expand their use, and urged them to work together early on to aggregate demand and coordinate approaches in order to influence and develop markets and achieve maximum advantage from economies of scale and volume discounts. The delegations also welcomed the innovative approach that the United Nations organizations had taken to identify non-United Nations partners for joint collaboration, as well as collaborative approaches among United Nations development system organizations. They encouraged United Nations country teams to pursue the delivering-as-one modality, as a prime mover of joint procurement. They called on the organizations to systematically report on joint procurement activities and savings to the Board, and to use the report's findings to apply lessons learned and build on progress.

82. In response, the General Counsel and Director, Legal Group, UNOPS, expressed appreciation for delegations' encouragement and advice. UNOPS, as the entity responsible for coordinating procurement reporting among the organizations – as contained in the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations (DP/OPS/2016/6) – was focused on improving procurement reporting. He noted that the organizations had made much progress, despite the learning curve, and had achieved a level of

data confidence, which was now allowing them to tackle analytical aspects, as demonstrated in the report submitted to the Board at the session. UNOPS, he indicated, would share that approach with the procurement network of the UNDG High-level Committee on Management to forge a path forward for future reports.

83. The Chief, Procurement Services Branch, UNFPA, addressing the modest volume of procurement services provided to United Nations organizations, stressed that there were areas in which UNFPA could not collaborate, especially in light of the 'lead agency' concept. The Fund, he highlighted, was the only United Nations organization purchasing reproductive health commodities whereas UNICEF, for example, bought vaccines, an area in which UNFPA could not participate. The proposed study would help to identify areas where the organizations could collaborate on procurement. He stressed that guaranteeing adequate and enhanced controls for procurement, with stronger risk management measures, was a top priority for all three organizations. The High-level Committee on Management procurement network, he pointed out, was working closely with UNDG to determine how the organizations could support country offices in implementing joint procurement by using the common rules, policies and processes which the network had put in place.

84. The Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, stressed that UNDP was also committed to using the same procurement tools designed by the High-level Committee on Management procurement network, and indicated that he would share the Board's commitments and suggestions with the committee, ensuring that the issue was dealt with at both the High-level Committee and the UNDG levels. He noted that the United Nations system-wide approach was in fact driving the current level of progress. He echoed that the organizations had reached a level of data confidence that would spur progress even further.

85. The Executive Board took note of the report of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on joint procurement activities (DP-FPA-OPS/2016/1).

X. Follow-up to the Programme Coordinating Board Meeting of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

86. The Executive Board decided to defer discussion of this item on the report on the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (DP/2016/27–DP/FPA/2016/11) to the first regular session 2017.

XI. Field visits

87. The two rapporteurs presented their respective reports to the Board: (a) the report of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board field visit to Guinea (DP-FPA-OPS/2016/CRP.1); and (b) the report of the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to Kyrgyzstan (DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2016/CRP.1). The Regional Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and the Chair of the United Nations Development Group Regional Team for Europe and Central Asia presented remarks on the field visits to their respective regions. In addition, the Resident Coordinator for Kyrgyzstan, a guest speaker, further elaborated on the visit from the country team and national perspective.

88. In their general comments, Board members stressed the usefulness of the field visits in giving them first-hand experience of the work of United Nations development organizations on

the ground and in helping them to understand their positioning at the country level in collaboration with government and partners. They saw the field visits as an excellent way to share experiences and lessons learned. They also highlighted the importance of United Nations system coherence in programme delivery at county level, building on their different comparative advantages.

89. The Executive Board took note of the report of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board field visit to Guinea (DP-FPA-OPS/2016/CRP.1).

90. The Executive Board took note of the report of the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to Kyrgyzstan (DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNWWFP/2016/CRP.1).

XII. Other matters

Joint dialogue with the Principals of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on advancing the humanitarian-development nexus within the 2030 Agenda

91. The session included a special event: a joint dialogue between the Executive Board and the Executive Director, UNOPS; the Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA; the Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA; the Director for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP; and the Director for Crisis Response, UNDP, on the topic, "the 2030 Agenda: Advancing the Humanitarian-Development Nexus". The presentation and discussions focused on four main questions: (a) how implementation of the 2030 Agenda allowed for a more comprehensive, joint approach by humanitarian and development actors and how it looked in practice; (b) how UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS viewed their readiness to take forward the Commitment to Action; (c) how addressing large movements of refugees and migrants linked with commitments made in the 2030 Agenda to 'leave no one behind' and the role of development actors; and (d) what major shift was needed to finance results against collective and humanitarian outcomes.

92. Board members welcomed the discussion and underlined the need to reflect development perspectives in humanitarian planning and implementation. Progress to date had not been sufficient in tackling humanitarian-development obstacles, due in part to underfunding. Governance of humanitarian-development integration was key and should build on the 2030 Agenda and World Humanitarian Summit commitments. Board members noted that they should also have greater oversight in forging a single humanitarian-development framework. Humanitarian activities were characterized as distinct from development in that they had an international legal underpinning, which should not be open to negotiation, and interventions often did address both humanitarian and development needs. The 2030 Agenda likewise addressed humanitarian and disaster needs, which had to be integrated into Board and agency planning. From the donor perspective, it was important to view humanitarian and development work as interrelated. Key to success was building national and local capacity for the long term. Delegations sought clarification on whether further incentives or guidance were needed to integrate the humanitarian-development nexus. The need for that integration and to address people's basic needs had become acute during migrant and refugee movements from crisis-affected areas. There was strong support for joint analysis, multi-year planning, transparency and innovation. The quadrennial review was a key normative driver in helping to integrate the humanitarian-development nexus.

93. Panel members stressed that the United Nations could not resolve the humanitarian and migrant crisis alone. Given the amount of funding needed to address humanitarian crises, the role of the private sector was crucial, along with effective use of official development

assistance, strong governance and an independent resident coordinator. A fundamental shift was needed from project-based funding to more flexible demand-based, unearmarked, innovative funding so that humanitarian and development actors could adapt their programmes to changing needs and risk levels through a multi-year approach, as noted at the World Humanitarian Summit. They also highlighted the importance of data analysis in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and leaving no one behind. On migrants and refugees, there was the need to create local job opportunities and generate hope. Country-level best practices offered a rich fount donors and Member States could build on at low cost. The 2030 Agenda purposely utilized language denoting 'convergence' between the humanitarian and development dimensions, which implied joint planning and implementation. At county level, the resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators integrated all development and humanitarian partners in planning and implementation. There was the need, however, to respect both the humanitarian and development 'spaces', which could not be merged, and to focus on root causes. There was also the need to prioritize burden sharing in addressing the migrant and refugee crisis, thereby avoiding unrealistic solutions to deport or absorb.

Address by the Chairperson of the UNDP UNFPA UNOPS and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Staff Council

94. In his statement to the Board, the Chairperson, UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council, touched on a number of topics, including transparency, adherence to principles, human rights of 'non-staff' and equal pay for equal work, audit reports and legality on the use of 'non-staff', issues with retirement age, delays in pension payments, performance and career development, the importance of having the Ombudsperson of the United Nations Funds and Programmes address the Board, the use of compensation packages, and respect for the principles of international civil service.

95. In their management responses, the Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, the Director, Division for Human Resources, UNFPA, and the General Counsel and Director, Legal Group, UNOPS, respectively, underscored the good working relationships each organization had with the Staff Council and the measures each was taking to address staff concerns.

96. In the sole intervention, one delegation stated that while the Board could not directly take steps to address staff issues, Board Members expected the United Nations organizations and the Staff Council to act in accordance with the United Nations principles and values laid out in the United Nations Charter.

97. The Executive Board took note of the statement by the Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council.

Annex

Statement of the UNFPA Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific made at the informal consultation on UNFPA country programme documents on 25 August 2016

The Asia Pacific region, the most populous and diverse in the world, is home to the very wealthy and the very poor, as well as numerous ethnic and religious groups, and it is the most disaster prone. We can see a range of population trends across the region, with countries at different stages of the demographic transition: some are seeking to attend to the needs of a growing youth population, while others endeavour to reap the demographic dividend, and still others struggle to meet the challenges of a rapidly aging population. Despite the diversity, there are regional trends relevant to most countries.

A positive trend seen region wide is the significant reduction in maternal deaths over the past 15 years, with the maternal mortality ratio going down 64 per cent, from 353 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 127 per 100,000 live births in 2015. However, over 83,000 women still die each year from causes related to pregnancy and child birth. Moreover, national averages often mask a lack of access to high-quality sexual and reproductive health services for excluded and marginalized communities, such as those living in remote rural areas or in urban slums, migrants, internally displaced people and refugees, indigenous people and ethnic and religious minorities. Complications in pregnancy and childbirth continue to be a leading cause of death among adolescent girls. Of grave concern is the prevalence of violence against women and girls. Empowering youth to participate in decision-making about their own lives and their communities is another challenge faced by countries in the region. Countries at a more advanced stage in the demographic transition struggle to ensure that the growing elderly population are ensured a life of dignity.

Countries in the region have embraced the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and efforts are underway to adapt the SDGs to national priorities – an effort that UNFPA supports as part of a United Nations system-wide collaboration. Strengthening data generation, analysis and use is central to this effort.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh has achieved dramatic advances in the health and education of its people while promoting economic growth that has lifted the country into lower-middle-income-country status. Particularly noteworthy is the expansion of sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, and the consequent reduction of maternal mortality. On the other hand, inequality has grown and 5,200 women continue to die each year as a result of pregnancy and childbirth. Three out of five girls are married before they are 18 years, and a staggering 87 percent of married women have experienced gender-based violence. One of the most densely populated countries in the world, Bangladesh ranks 20th in the global vulnerability index and is the fifth most natural disaster-prone country in the world.

In line with national priorities, in its 9th Country Programme, UNFPA will contribute to the Government's commitment to women's and girls' rights, particularly to increase family planning, skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric and newborn care (EMONC), eliminate child marriage and prevent violence against women and girls. UNFPA will provide high level technical expertise to help interpret population and socio-demographic data, toward reaping the demographic dividend through investments in adolescents and youth, who make up 30% of the population. We will also support the Government in the analysis and use of data to achieve the SDGs, while eliminating exclusion and discrimination. The Programme will also contribute to disaster preparedness and response, ensuring that the needs of women, girls and young people are taken into account.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

UNFPA has collaborated with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea over the past thirty years in its effort to improve the quality of life of its people. This has contributed to significant increases in access to contraceptives and skilled birth attendance, which in turn have contributed to important reductions in maternal deaths, with the maternal mortality ratio declining from 85.1 to 65.9 per 100,000 live births over the past six years. UNFPA has supported national population surveys that

have produced essential data to inform policies and programmes. The country continues to face a protracted, underfunded humanitarian crisis, and is ranked 39 out of 191 countries at risk of disasters, according to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Index for Risk Management. This situation has affected health infrastructure and the quality of services, particularly in the most disaster-prone districts.

International sanctions, particularly those related to procurement of non-expendable equipment and supplies and international banking transactions, have disrupted programme implementation on several occasions, including during 2016. UNFPA will continue to work with the Government and other United Nations agencies to address this issue in a manner that is fully in accordance with the Security Council resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In line with the Government's priorities, UNFPA will focus its new country programme for 2017-2021 on the following areas: (a) increasing national capacity to deliver comprehensive maternal health and integrated sexual and reproductive health services; and (b) strengthening national capacity to produce, analyse and disseminate high-quality, disaggregated population data. UNFPA engagement in the country will focus on the national level. For example, UNFPA will provide technical assistance to develop and implement an equitable, rights-based national strategy on sexual and reproductive health, and improve the quality of midwifery skills by providing training in medical colleges as well as in-service training. Through life-saving interventions, such as the provision of reproductive health and midwifery kits, essential drugs and medicines, UNFPA aims to help ensure 350,000 safe deliveries each year.

UNFPA will provide technical assistance to help the Government to conduct the 2018 national population and housing census, in line with international standards, by establishing an international advisory panel. Building on good practices from the 2008 census and the 2014 social, economic and demographic health survey, UNFPA will work with the Government to ensure the consistency of national data for policy and programme development and implementation. UNFPA international staff members will accompany the census process from the conception of the project to its finalization. They will undertake independent field visits for quality assurance and work with the staff of the Central Bureau of Statistics, the national agency responsible for census, during data entry and processing, to review raw data-sets for internal consistency and validation of the data, with the possibility of requesting additional tabulations. UNFPA will also provide, as necessary, additional theme-based analyses, including on gender, ageing and social-demographic profile, written by international experts, in line with the mandate of Central Bureau of Statistics.

UNFPA will monitor programme implementation against baseline data through regular field visits to gather qualitative and quantitative information from the target provinces.

Islamic Republic of Iran

The health system of Iran is one of the most robust in the world, drawing its strength from its well-established primary health care system. Its impact can be seen in the low level of maternal mortality (19.7 per 100,000 live births in 2014). Since 2014, the health sector has undergone significant expansion, from rural-based primary health care to universal services in urban and rural areas. Iran has experienced a so-called 'youth bulge' over the past decade. One-third of the total population is aged 15-29 years. This youthful population presents an opportunity to harness the demographic dividend and to accelerate socio-economic development. Iran is, nevertheless, also a country with an ageing population, accompanied by economic, social and health-related challenges, which the country aims to address. Iran is seeking to improve the availability and analysis of disaggregated data for effective long-term planning and policy making on population and development issues.

The sixth country programme will support the Government to utilize the demographic window of opportunity for social and economic benefit. UNFPA will advocate for evidence-informed policies and action plans to address population dynamics, including ageing. The country programme will continue to focus on ending preventable maternal deaths, including in humanitarian emergencies. Support will be provided to enhance midwifery policies, institutionalize a national maternal death surveillance

system and generate evidence to identify and address inequalities, thereby enhancing national sexual and reproductive health policies.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

The Lao People's Democratic Republic halved its national poverty rate over the past two decades. The gender equality gap has narrowed across all levels of education enrolment but girls still encounter challenges accessing and completing secondary education – due partly to one of the highest rates of early marriage in the region. One in three women marries before the age of 18 and one in five women of reproductive age gives birth before her 18th birthday. The maternal death ratio declined dramatically, from 905 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 197 per 100,000 live births in 2015. At the same time, the high maternal mortality ratio and high adolescent fertility rate, combined with high rates of violence against women, point to persistent gender inequality. The country has 49 officially recognized ethnic groups and a young population age structure, with nearly 60 per cent estimated to be younger than 25 years. Investing in appropriate education, skills and knowledge for young men and women, including on sexual and reproductive health, can contribute to the Lao People's Democratic Republic benefiting from the demographic bonus.

In the sixth country programme, UNFPA will focus its collaboration on reducing maternal mortality and increasing youth participation. In particular, UNFPA will provide technical assistance to enhance implementation of the National Family Planning Action Plan, the Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Strategy and the Midwifery Improvement Plan, as part of the organization's support to universal health coverage. UNFPA places a special emphasis on the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescents and youth, including their access to contraception and gender-sensitive comprehensive sexuality education. The programme will provide policy advice on the prevention of violence against women and girls, drawing on the gender-based violence prevalence study recently undertaken with UNFPA support. To support the country's national development priorities as well as its integration into the ASEAN Economic Community, UNFPA will support the generation of evidence and research to ensure that decision-making contributes to sustainable social and economic development, particularly for young people and ethnic minorities.

Mongolia

Mongolia has made great strides in improving the health of women and girls and guaranteeing their rights. It was one of only nine countries in the world to achieve and surpass the target of a 75 per cent reduction in maternal mortality by 2015. Mongolia's gender inequality index decreased from 0.401 in 2005 to 0.325 in 2014, and today, more women (27 per cent) attain tertiary education than men (17 per cent). The youth development index is higher than the global average, though the country scored lower in political and civil participation. Nearly 88.3 per cent of domestic violence victims are women, with 40 per cent of them young women aged 15-34 years, who are more unlikely to report such incidents. The country recently took legislative action to criminalize domestic violence.

The sixth country programme will focus its collaboration on issues of youth and gender equality. UNFPA will support the improvement of the legal framework for youth-friendly health services and collaborate in the development of state policies on health and on youth, the fifth National Reproductive Health Programme and the National Programme on Youth Development. UNFPA will also support the formulation of gender-responsive life skills education and comprehensive sexuality education standards for secondary and tertiary schools, technical and vocational education centres, and life-long education centres. National Platforms for youth participation will be strengthened and expanded to ensure the voices of adolescents and youth, particularly girls, are included in national laws, policies and programmes. UNFPA will support the establishment of formal mechanisms for this purpose at national and subnational levels.

The gender programme will advocate for sufficient state budget allocation and effective implementation of laws and policies, including the revised law on domestic violence. UNFPA will support the establishment of effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms for national protection systems to deliver on obligations, including under CEDAW and the Universal Periodic

Review, and will focus particularly on advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights, and preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, including in emergency situations.

Thailand

Thailand has achieved pioneering advances in human development over the past decades. It has built a universal health coverage system, which has reached nearly 100 per cent of the population, and has succeeded in achieving high levels of access to sexual and reproductive health, including family planning. As a result, Thailand has seen significant drops in the fertility rate as well as the maternal mortality ratio. However, the adolescent birth rate has increased sharply, beginning in the early 2000s. This suggests that young people face serious obstacles to sexual and reproductive health services and lack information to responsibly exercise their rights in this sphere of life. The country passed the Adolescent Pregnancy Act to address this issue. At the same time, Thailand is going through a rapid transition to ageing society, and has taken important policy measures to address this challenge.

Under the 11th country programme, UNFPA will support Thailand to implement the Adolescent Pregnancy Law, aiming to halve the number of unintended adolescent births over the next five years. Through policy dialogue and advocacy, UNFPA will help national institutions and systems to promote youth participation to advance adolescent reproductive health and rights, including the provision of youth-friendly services and comprehensive sexuality education in the schools. Within the framework of the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan, UNFPA will support the analysis and utilization of data toward promoting evidence-based policy-making on population-related issues, including adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights, youth empowerment, gender equality and aging. Emphasis will be placed on reaching the most vulnerable populations, including those in the southern region, migrants and ethnic minorities.

Viet Nam

Viet Nam has made impressive gains in human development, achieving or surpassing many of the MDGs, significantly reducing maternal mortality and expanding access to family-planning services within the context of rapid economic growth, The country hopes to build on these successes to further improve national capacity to undertake evidence-based policy and programme development and implementation, to address emerging inequalities, advance human rights and achieve equitable and sustainable development.

Nearly one third of the population of Viet Nam are young people. To take full advantage of this demographic opportunity, the country will need to advance comprehensive youth development, including access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, and youth participation in national policies and programmes, while addressing, at the same time, the challenge of a rapidly aging population. While Vietnam has achieved importance advances in gender equality, discriminatory practices and stereotypes persist. Nationwide, up to 60 per cent of women aged 18-60 years have experiences domestic violence. Hence, the legal framework and law enforcement need to be further strengthened with the active engagement of civil society.

Under the ninth country programme, UNFPA will undertake participatory and evidence-based advocacy for rights-based national laws, policies and programmes on adolescents and youth development. UNFPA will focus on adolescent sexual and reproductive health information and services, promotion of youth participation in policy-making and comprehensive sexuality education, and will support the development of multisectoral services aimed at preventing gender-based violence with the active participation of civil society.

UNFPA will collaborate in the strengthening of national policies on population and development, sexual and reproductive health, and human rights, based on an improved national evidence base and its effective utilization to integrate population dynamics into national development policies. By focusing on youth development, gender equality and better use of population data, including on emerging issues such as internal migration and climate change, UNFPA seeks to help the country to address the present needs and demands of its population, while at the same time ensuring adequate preparation for the future. This will be an important contribution to Vietnam's effort to achieve the SDGs.